

HOMENEW DELHI

THREE OF A KIND

This three-part New Delhi bungalow by Iram Sultan is a Wunderkammer of moon-like luminaires, otherworldly paintings and amorphous objets d'art that could have tumbled out of an alternate realm

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One side of the living room is a riotous kaleidoscope of artworks. Amongst the most prominent are a composition by Andy Warhol (right) and Anil Dodiya's comic character (left). An open shelving unit serves to demarcate the space from the dining room beyond. All furniture is by DeMuro Dax, except the end table, a K2 table design. The table lamp is a Flos find. The fluted wood panelling is by Build Kraft India.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT In the formal living room, a dusty pink sofa and a coffee table, both by DeMuro Das, underpin a series of artworks by Aditi Singh. In the dining room, a Sachin George Sebastian opus serves as quite the backdrop to candleholders by Eriksson Kishoyu. The vestibule outside the living room is cocooned in fluted wood panelling that highlights an artwork by Shaurya Kumar. The console is by KOY FACING PAGE. The other side of the living room is softer and quieter. The restraint of the DeMuro Das sofas is echoed in spirit by Giorgiati's Hug chairs, while handmade herringbone panels by Faglie d'Oro lend to the obdurate lightness of being. The silk carpet and table lamps are from Slave Brothers and Itas respectively. The glass doors, outfitted in a slim metal frame, are JB Glass designs



few interior designers can walk into a home and arrive at a vision by the time they walk out. But then again, few interior designers are Iram Sultan. The NCR-based design doyenne demonstrated a particular kind of serenity for a project in the capital a few years ago, when she was commissioned by a multigenerational

family—comprising two sets of brothers, their respective wives and children, and their parents—to redesign their two-storey, 21,000-square-foot bungalow. "When I met them, I came to a firm conclusion. These were all fascinating individuals with distinct identities, but they were bound together like yam," recalls the principal and founder of her eponymous Gurugram-headquartered interior design studio. It was a discovery that led her to an instinctual point of departure, reflecting an aesthetic lexicon that has, in recent years, been galvanised by a moppie-like second sight for spotting the beauty in things long before others. Evidently, this home was no exception.

What was, perhaps, a departure from the norm was the layout: a triad of separate family homes carved out under a single roof. Of course, it was a phenomenon to which Iram was no stranger, having designed a slew of multigenerational homes in the span of her over twenty-five-year career. But as she recalls, this time felt different. "We knew we had to create three different spaces that somehow felt whole," she shares of the brief, whose rationale she discovered soon enough. The clients were spread across two floors and three generations, yes, but they shared a mutual love of entertaining, which they often did together—guest list and occasion, no bar. "The project was a journey of faith and discovery. And a lot of eating and drinking," jokes Iram. She continues, "During the design process, I discovered that they were these generous hosts and that one of the sons was an incredible chef, which of course played into the design." The top priority, then, obvious considerations notwithstanding, was to somehow, somewhere, make room for more bonhomie. Exactly how and where was up to her.

The answer came in the guise of the poolside annexe, designed by architect Manish Mehta, which Iram turned

into a serene, welcoming oasis. In a bid to minimise the noise and amplify the elements, she pared back the palette while delivering an object lesson in opposites. Exhibit A: the ceiling, which she warmed in timber as an antidote to the cool limestone floor. She similarly cancelled the sight lines, layering the three-way glass windows with ripple fold linen curtains. The ripple fold linen curtains transition between offering clear views of the pool and cutting out light as needed. This enhances the indoor-outdoor experience, perfect for hosting events like pool parties or barbecues, where guests can enjoy the surrounding gardens and pool area. But muting the colour didn't mean muting the character, which Iram made sure with such characterful additions as a pair of Tanya Goel x Roashad Shroff chairs, a large Jaipur Rugs carpet, Shades of India cushions, and yards and yards of brilliant white linen in the way of curtains and slipcovers. And yet, the tour de force, she maintains, does not lie in heroic statements, but balance. Like the Chlorophylla chandelier by Ross Lovegrove for Artemide, which delicately balances the decor and creates enchanting chiaroscuro effects on the ceiling under the perfect lighting condition.

The magic persists, even multiplies, in the main dwelling, in the way of gleaming Armani bronze skirting—used as a leitmotif in the common areas and as bespoke inlay in the private suites—that appears, in a way, to stitch the spaces together. Iram gave each one its own spirit, starting with the large and luminous foyer, which she tuned celestial, with a moon-like luminaire by Davide Croppi that comes alive at night. She gave the walls equal attention, designating a Biraaj Dodiya artwork to one and a Sunil Padwal to another. As for the spaces in between, she worked backwards, bringing in a Julien Segard textile, a Sangita Maity metal plate art work cluster, a Sachin George Sebastian paper abstraction and a rustic log bench by Imperfecto Lab, to create an elliptical orbit of art. >>

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Enclosed by glass on three sides, the lobby glows like a jewel box come sundown. The Biraj Dodiya painting was turned right and the client's mazon sculptures together. A log from Imperfecto masquerades as a bench, while the Armani bronze skirting is inlaid with an antique brass inlay. THE FACING PAGE An Aldo Cibicorno artwork adorns the wall, matched in scale and signature by Klove's Asteroid homeware in the dining room. The cabinet, chairs alongside the table's base are all by DeMura Dra.

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It's almost as if the living room, composed of two seating areas, exists in a realm of its own. It's quiet, placid and otherworldly, and when darkness takes the day, seemingly invisible. The room is hushed by soft tones, silk carpets and a Moooi chandelier, which as Iram explains, "is delicate enough to be missed until the lights come on." Other moments, such as the series of framed Aditi Singh works or the bespoke silk cushion covers, are more discernible. But not nearly as much as the fluted marble fireplace, which sits front and centre, channelling a luminous beacon with or without a fire.

For Iram and the homeowners, a fluid living-dining layout was always on the cards. What wasn't was one left all the way open. And so, in a bid to demarcate the spaces while also creating a backdrop for art, the designer introduced a custom double-sided shelving unit, enhancing it with works by Andy Warhol and Sachin George Sebastian, the former sourced from the clients' private collection. She used a similar sleight of hand with the dining table, halving the amorphous timber top with a larger-than-life Klove chandelier and cocooning the area in such art as a folded metal Aldo Chapparo installation and a dramatic Divya Singh rendition. As for each of the private suites, Iram took cues from that respective family unit, holding a mirror to their sensibilities with thoughtful programmatic interventions.

In this home, evenings are always special. There's always a meal to be shared or people to be met or moments to delight in. The space glows like a jewel box when the family is home—perhaps a reflection of their spirits, perhaps a reflection of Iram's own. "There's a sense of timelessness, warmth, ease and joy here," she reflects. "Our work has always been focused on the clients, about representing them through our designs, about creating joyous spaces that hum and sing with their notes. This house is all that and more." The studio team that worked in harmony on this home comprised Iram Sultan, Mohit Kansal, Ankush Gupta & Siddhant Manocha. ♦



FROM TOP The staircase cuts a larger-than-life figure with a hanging light by Parachino. The walls, papered in grasscloth, cede the spotlight to concrete and metal artworks by Kathin Barman. A peek into the lobby, where fluted wood wall panelling serves as a backdrop for a circular paper work by Sachin George Sebastian and a row of miniature metal works by Sangeeta Masti. FACING PAGE In one of the bedrooms, a green artwork by Nishi Agarwal takes a leaf from the outdoors, as does the natural grain wooden flooring by Willow View. A Jaipur Rugs carpet underpins the bed. The pendant is an Atelier Lumys novelty. All furniture is by DeMuro Das

